



The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands

September 23, 2022

THE SITUATION IN NUMBERS

The Bahamas

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on March 15, 2020. During the period September 17 – 23, 2022, The Bahamas reported 64 newly confirmed COVID-9 cases. Among the newly confirmed cases during the period:

- 46 (71.9%) occurred in New Providence;
- 35 (54.7%) were men and 29 (45.3%) were women.

As of September 23, The Bahamas conducted a total of 253,336 real time PCR tests.

Turks and Caicos Islands

The first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported on March 23, 2020. During the period September 15 – 21, 2022, the Turks and Caicos Islands reported seven (7) newly confirmed COVID-19 cases and no (0) newly confirmed COVID-19 related deaths. Among the total confirmed cases during the lifetime of the pandemic:

- 5,180 (81.1%) occurred in Providenciales;
- 3,024 (47.3%) were men, 3,345 (52.4%) were women, and 19 (0.3%) were unknown.

As of September 21, TCI conducted a total of 21,293 real time PCR tests.

THE BAHAMAS As of September 23, 2022

Confirmed	37,267
Active	139
Recovered	36,070
Hospitalized	26
Deaths	833

TURKS AND CAICOS As of September 21, 2022

Confirmed	6,388
Active	4
Recovered	6,333
Hospitalized	220
Deaths	36

Total cases and deaths

The Bahamas (as of September 23, 2022)

Turks and Caicos Islands (as of September 21, 2022)

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	29,534	592
Grand Bahama	3,692	128
Abaco	866	26
Eleuthera	890	18
Exuma	593	11
Bimini & Cat Cay	288	13
Berry Islands	173	5
Inagua	95	4
Andros	413	10
Long Island	153	5
Cat Island	156	3
Acklins	45	0
San Salvador	21	0
Crooked Island	40	0
Mayaguana	21	2
Ragged Island	0	0
Locations Pending	287	16
TOTAL	37,267	833

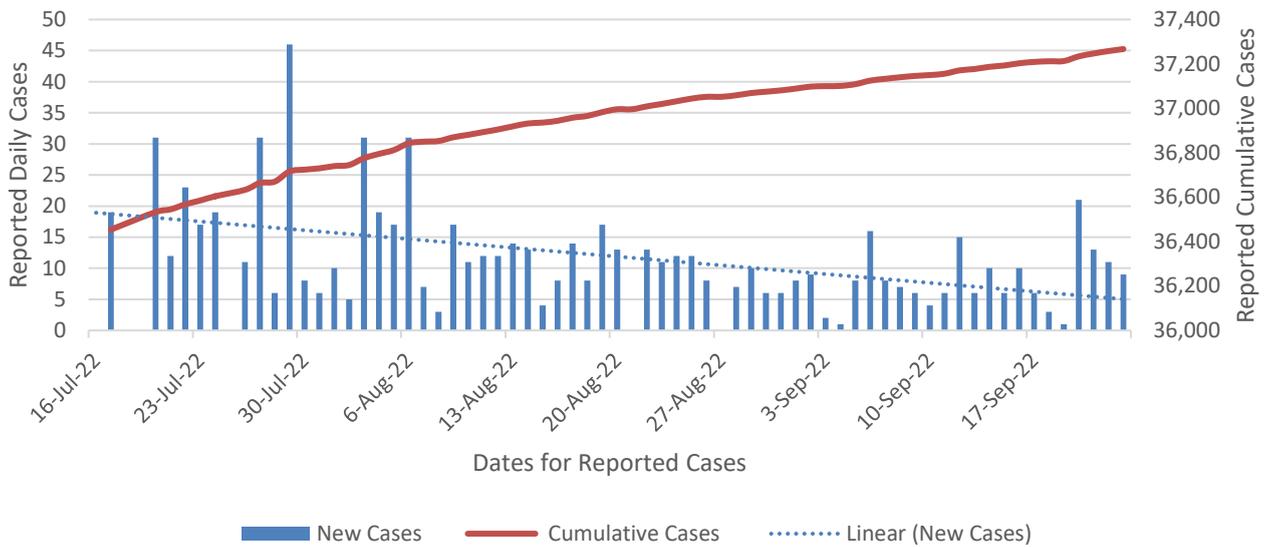
Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Providenciales	5,180	24
North Caicos	132	0
Parrot Cay	20	0
Grand Turk	902	11
South Caicos	110	1
Middle Caicos	36	0
Ambergris Cay	4	0
Pine Cay	1	0
Salt Cay	3	0
Unknown	0	0
TOTAL	6,388	36

SITUATION SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS

The Bahamas

- The incidence of new COVID-19 cases in the country continues to decline, with a stable increase in the cumulative cases.
- The Health Services (COVID-19) (Prevention and Management of Community Spread) Rules, 2021 and the Health Services (COVID-19) (General) Rules, 2021 remain in effect.

New & Cumulative Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in The Bahamas by Report Date, as of September 23, 2022 (n=37,267)

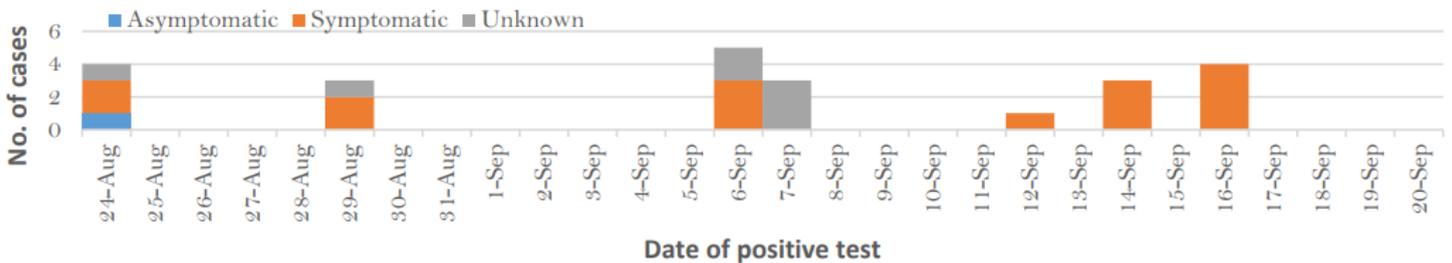


Source: Bahamas Ministry of Health & Wellness COVID-19 Report Updates

Turks and Caicos Islands

- The incidence of new COVID-19 cases in country remains low, with a stable increase in the cumulative cases.
- There were no reported deaths since February 15, 2022.

Figure 1: Symptomatic and Asymptomatic TCI COVID-19 cases by date of positive test August 24 to September 20, 2022 (n=23)



Source: Turks and Caicos Islands COVID-19 Situation Report #127

RESPONSE

- PAHO/WHO continues to provide both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands with access to updated technical guidelines, technical assistance and situation updates related to the COVID-19 response.
- PAHO/WHO continues to support the country in efforts to increase COVID-19 vaccination coverage through an ongoing communication campaign.
- PAHO/WHO continues to provide technical support to fully implement the Electronic Immunization Registry (EIR), which will be used as a repository for COVID-19 vaccination data.

The Bahamas

- The Bahamas continues to distribute COVID-19 vaccine doses, including booster dose vaccinations and pediatric vaccinations for children ages 5-11.
- As of September 24, 172,509 persons were fully vaccinated - including those who received the one dose Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine.
- Moderate to severe COVID-19 cases continue to be treated at Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH), Doctors Hospital West, Sandilands Rehabilitation Center, and the Rand Memorial Hospital (RMH).
- The COVID-19 Mobile Unit continues to operate and provide vaccinations to individuals who are homebound, hearing impaired, mentally challenged, physically challenged, and visually impaired as well as their caretakers.
- COVID-19 laboratory PCR testing continues at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL), PMH, RMH, and private sector laboratories.
- The NRL is using a National Respiratory Surveillance Genomics Database for genetic analysis. They have identified several genomic deletions and variant mutations.
- The NRL has confirmed that the Alpha, Delta, Gamma and Omicron variants of concern, and the Iota, variant of interests in the country. Omicron continues to be the main circulating variant.
- PAHO/WHO and the COVID-19 Genomic Surveillance Regional Network continue to support the Ministry of Health & Wellness to implement in-country genomic sequencing for SARS-CoV-2.
- The University of The Bahamas continues to offer an on-line contact tracing course.
- The country still utilizes Go.Data to collect data on confirmed COVID-19 cases and contact tracing.
- The Public Hospitals Authority continues to distribute personal protective equipment across all public hospitals and clinics.
- A Cuban health contingent of 28 Cuban specialized Nurses continues to support clinical care through a bilateral agreement between the two countries.
- The Ministry of Health & Wellness continues to provide telemedicine, telepsychology, mental health, and psychosocial support services.
- The Ministry of Health & Wellness, the Office of the Prime Minister and PAHO/WHO continue collaboration on a communication strategy for increasing COVID-19 vaccination coverage, informed by the results of a recent social mobilization project and vaccination survey.
- The Ministry of Health & Wellness, through a collaboration with PAHO/WHO, continues to conduct training for the Electronic Immunization Registry; COVID-19 vaccinations will soon be included in the database. They will continue to conduct training exercises in the Family Islands through November 2022.
- Deputy Prime Minister Chester Cooper announced that The Bahamas will align its cruise arrival protocols with air arrival COVID-19 protocols.
- Effective June 19, 2022 vaccinated persons are no longer required to have a negative COVID-19 test or travel health visa to enter or travel among the islands of The Bahamas.
- As of September 20, the Ministry of Health & Wellness eliminated the requirement for unvaccinated persons to provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test.
- On September 21, the Ministry of Health & Wellness announced that they will remove the national mask mandate, specifically for wearing masks in public settings. Masks will still be required in public and private healthcare facilities, indoor classrooms at educational settings and visitors/non-residential workers at long-term care facilities; this relaxation will go into effect on October 1, 2022.

Turks and Caicos Islands

- The Turks and Caicos Islands continues to distribute COVID-19 vaccine doses, including booster dose vaccinations and pediatric vaccinations for children ages 5-11.
- Persons 16 years and over are eligible and continue to receive booster vaccines.
- 30,469 residents are fully vaccinated and 21% of the population has received at least one booster dose. The country has achieved 87.1% coverage for COVID-19 vaccination.
- The Alpha, Gamma, Delta B.1.617.2 and Omicron and Omicron BA.2 Variants of Concern have been confirmed in-country. Omicron continues to be the main circulating variant.
- Persons continue to register for the COVID-19 vaccine via the online portal which is available in three languages: English, French-Creole, and Spanish.
- The country continues to utilize Go.Data for field data collection and contact tracing investigations.
- Residents can still access COVID-19 tests via community drive-through services throughout the islands.
- The National Public Health Laboratory continues to conduct COVID-19 PCR testing; they have performed 21,293 RT-PCR tests as of September 21, 2022.
- The Ministry of Health and Human Services continues to provide health promotion materials about the COVID-19 vaccine through both traditional and social media platforms.

GAPS/CHALLENGES

- Public compliance with public health protocols, vaccination hesitancy and resistance, and COVID-19 fatigue continue to present challenges in both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands. Vaccine hesitancy/resistance is of particular concern among vulnerable populations, health care workers and other emergency and frontline workers.
- While The Bahamas has capacity to identify the presence of COVID-19 variants, neither The Bahamas nor Turks and Caicos Islands have in-country sequencing capacity. This presents a challenge for the timely identification of new variants. Work is underway to increase laboratory testing capacity for genomic sequencing for SARS-CoV2 in The Bahamas.